

REMARKS

Amendments

Claim 24 is cancelled. Claims 25-34 are amended to depend from allowed claim 20, rather than cancelled claim 24. Applicants reserve the right to file a continuation application directed to the subject matter deleted by the cancellation of claim 24 and the amendments to claims 25-34.

New independent claim 35 corresponds to original claim 1 with the inclusion of the feature recited in original claim 3. In the first Office Action on the merits, Paper No. 6, issued December 30, 2002, original claim 3 was not rejected in view of prior art. Claim 3 was instead rejected as being improperly dependent on claim 2. As discussed in the Reply filed March 28, 2003, this rejection was in error as claim 3 did properly depend from claim 2. This rejection was then subsequently withdrawn.

At page 5 of the Office Action issued February 17, 2004, the Examiner indicated that claims 1, 2, 4-20, and 22-23 are allowable. By the above amendments, claims 25-34 are amended to depend from allowable claim 20.

It is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Allowance of the instant application is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 USC §102(b) and §103

Claims 24, 27-30, and 33-34 are rejected as being anticipated in view of Auman et al. (US 5,520,845 or US 6,139,926). In addition, claims 24-34 are rejected as being obvious in view of Baur et al. (US 5,188,758) and Auman et al. (US 5,520,845 or US 6,139,926). These rejections are rendered moot by the above amendments.

As noted above, claim 24 is cancelled and claims 25-34 are amended to depend from allowable claim 20. Thus, these amendments render moot the rejections under 35 USC §102(b) and §103.

Withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with this response or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-3402.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian P. Heaney', is written over a horizontal line.

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